Assuring yourself that the individual you hire as a job superintendent is the right one is made easier when each selection follows some definite checking steps. It’s never a procedure where guesswork or chance should be present.

Here is how contractors with top records for success in this process go about doing so. It’s a composite list of the checking steps these men use all of the time.

First, look for the man with varied experience. The individual whose work record is limited to one specific area could be helpless when confronted with job problems in others.

Expertise in one narrow field alone seldom makes for the good superintendent. It must be supplemented with at least narrow acquaintance with others.

His capability of getting along with others has top priority among the points that you are considering. The day of domination of workers through force alone is definitely gone.

This is also an asset that should have been present in his past record. It is unprofitable for you to have to teach him this in his new post.

How much does he know about the importance of making a profit in business operations? Without at least some such knowledge plus proper attitude toward profits, his value as a potential super declines.

Keep in mind that he is going to have a lot to do with whether or not profit materializes from work that he handles. It has to be something for which he has understanding and appreciation.

Be sure that he has a good knowledge of materials, supplies and tools. Without this his capability as a super is going to be limited.

And be sure, also, that he is the type of man who constantly searches for more knowledge in these areas. Things keep changing so fast no one can depend solely on past acquired knowledge.

Dependable

Is he the type of individual whose loyalty to your contracting business can be depended upon in the future? This has to be complete and total.

How his loyalty is exercised in his work will have a great deal to do with the future success of every job over which he has supervision.

The good super is also the one whose control over his personal emotions is always well established. This is usually something that has been developed in the past and not something that you can depend upon being formulated in the future.

Capability to read plans and specifications accurately should have been demonstrated by this individual in the past. This can be developed on the job, of course,
but sufficient educational backgrounds to do so is necessary even then. It is best not taken for granted that he can develop the capability to do so from scratch.

Desire to better his position in the world is desirable in this candidate for the supers job in your business. Without it you may have an individual content with “just getting by.”

That contentment with his personal life is sure to carry over into his work. It is not an attitude that will result in your satisfaction later with having selected him.

Work Improvement

Has this man demonstrated a desire to improve himself in the work he has done in the past? That can be of major importance since the good superintendent has to do this in his new job.

It is so important to his new position that his potential for real value to your contracting business will develop only as he does so personally.

Avoid basing your selection with consideration of only one person at the time. Pick your new super from two or three possible candidates. Weigh each against the other.

This step will give you the better picture that you need in order to make the best selection. If possible to do so, let each candidate know that he has competition for the job; that is a sure way of learning more about his individual capabilities.

Resist the temptation to select a man because he is a “good old boy.” That asset may make him a valuable workman but could be his undoing as a superintendent.

Make sure that this is not a major factor in your decision though it could be a good minor one. It should never be a decider or a point which may sway your judgment over other doubtful factors. It’s merely a supplemental asset to other things of more importance.

Take your time in making any selection. Spur of the moment decisions are no guarantee or assurance that a good pick has been made.

Even where emergency situations exist nothing will be lost by devoting a half hour to the choice you might have made in ten minutes. If something must be done for an emergency situation make whatever you must do “temporary” in nature.

Do some checking into the credit rating of the man being considered. The better it is the more assurance you have that he is a person capable of responsibility and exercise of control over what he does.

It is not an indication that he will be perfect for the job but it does tell you he will not have financial problems that can affect his working capability.

Doing some checking with the men whose work efforts he will direct is worthwhile if it can be done in a subtle manner without their being aware of your reasons for doing so. Look for basic information and not personal feelings alone.

Check on his ability to handle record keeping and paper work. There probably will not be much that he has to handle but even this is important. Should he have no capability of this kind the mistakes and errors he will make are sure to create a lot of headaches for yourself. If he has had no experience of this nature watch his initial efforts closely. It is easiest to set things straight then.

When you are after a man with previous supervisory experience be sure to check everything closely. Take nothing for granted in those experiences. Find out why he is available and be sure in your own mind that all information is known to yourself. Men of this type, without flaws, are few and far between.

All of the foregoing can assure any contractor that the selection of a new superintendent he has made will be a good one. They are no guarantee of perfection, of course, but they do provide the best possible chance that the man so chosen will be a good one in the future.